

Joe McCarthy's Spirit Lingers On

By Drew Pearson

On the Fourth of July, 1951, the New Orleans Item and the Madison Capital Times sent reporters through crowds celebrating the founding of the Republic, asking them to sign unidentified copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. In Wisconsin 111 out of 112 refused to sign. In Louisiana 24 out of 36 refused.

Most of those who read the documents declared them Communist or radical or even suggested the FBI should investigate their authors. Some said they had relatives in the Government and didn't want to be mixed up with anything subversive.

This was at the height of the Joe McCarthy era during which the late Senator from Wisconsin had bullyragged witnesses until a lot of people believed McCarthy's charge that the State Department was riddled with Communists.

Today things have changed—somewhat—though we could be on the verge of another Joe McCarthy era.

In Montana last week I found that the old witch-hunting atmosphere of six years ago had evaporated. In 1962, when I spoke at Montana State University its president, Roland Renne, was under attack because the Board of Regents had asked him to fire 22 professors as pro-Communist.

President Renne refused to fire the professors, and today the atmosphere which he battled has been dissipated. Nobody now worries about Communist professors.

Some Fears Linger

"I was one of those 22 professors Renne was asked to fire," says Dr. Leon Johnson, who has now taken Renne's place as president of Montana State University.

In Montana also, then Vice President Richard Nixon, speaking in Helena in 1954, boasted that he had removed the Pentagon security clearance of Dr. Edward Condon, former director of the Bureau of Standards, who left that job after Nixon's Un-American Activities Committee hounded him. Condon's chief crime was talking to a Yugoslav diplomat at a cocktail party. Yet he devised the nose cone for American satellites which enabled the United States to penetrate outer space.

Elsewhere in the Nation the Joe McCarthy fear of Communists under neighbors' beds has pretty well evaporated. A courageous, persistent President has recently won some breakthroughs with Soviet Russia toward peace. He has finally overcome such critics as Sen. Karl Mundt (R-S.D.) and signed the new Consular Pact with Russia, and he is about to undertake vitally important negotiations toward

ending the dangerous U.S.-U.S.S.R. arms race.

Many Congressmen, however, seem convulsed with fear—or else use it as an excuse to oppose most-favored-nation treaties with the newly emerging countries of Czechoslovakia and Rumania. Czechoslovakia has thrown off the hard-core Communist government which long held sway there, while Rumania has been most helpful to us in the U.N. and with North Vietnam. However, the State Department seems fearful of Congressional fears over a most-favored-nation treaty to help them.

One reason, incidentally, for the manner in which we got so hopelessly bogged down in Vietnam was the fact that Joe McCarthy had purged all the Far East experts from the State Department.

Men like John Carter Vincent, John Paton Davies and Jack Service were excoriated by Joe McCarthy because when serving in China with Gen. George Marshall, then Ambassador, they concurred in his conclusion that Communist China was something to be reckoned with and that we should not cut all ties with Peking.

Exit the Experts

Dean Acheson, Truman's Secretary of State, refused to bow to McCarthy. But John

Foster Dulles, who followed him, ran for the storm cellar.

All the Far Eastern experts were purged. They were not around in 1954 to warn Eisenhower against following the advice of the late Cardinal Spellman of New York to send troops and heavy aid to puppet President Diem of South Vietnam. Nor were they around in September 1961 to warn President Kennedy against escalating our troop strength.

Nor were they around in late 1964 to warn President Johnson not to adopt the recommendations of Barry Goldwater to escalate the war.

Today, despite the wholesale change in most parts of the country, a few McCarthy clouds of fear are blowing up on the horizon.

In California, Max Rafferty, the rabid right-wing school superintendent, pounded on Joe McCarthy's fear psychosis so long and so effectively that he defeated a liberal Republican, Sen. Tom Kuchel, for the Senate.

And in Alabama, Ex-Gov. George Wallace has been banging the desk over godless communism with such Hitleresque harangues that some people are beginning to look under their beds again.

When an effective haranguer gets wide television exposure there is always danger. Crowds can be like sheep.

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